

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests consideration of the subject application as amended herein. This Amendment is submitted in response to a Final Office Action mailed on February 8, 2005. Claims 1-9, 13,14, 19-24, 26 and 27 are rejected. Claims 10 and 15 are objected. Claims 11, 12, 16-18, and 25 are allowable. In this Amendment claims 1, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 15 have been amended with claims 10 and 15 being rewritten into independent forms. No new matter has been added by this Amendment.

35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-9, 13,14, 19-24, 26 and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tsujii, et al., (U.S. Patent No. 6,641,670, hereinafter “Tsujii”) in view of Kishimura, et al., (U.S. Patent No. 8,203,359, hereinafter “Kishimura). Applicant respectfully submits the following remarks.

Tsujii did not teach a momentary valve as disclosed by Applicant. A valve is shown in Tsujii, for example, at Figure 1. However, Tsujii did not teach, suggest, or in any way indicate that the valve is a momentary valve as disclosed by Applicant. As taught by Applicant, a momentary valve is used so that the pressure used to cause the polymer solution source to be transferred to the buffer tank is controlled to prevent excess inert gas or bubbles into the system. For instance, as can be seen from [0030] of Applicant's application,

The momentary valve 112 functions to prevent excess inert gas to be flown into the polymer solution source 108. For example, an operator may turn on a valve to apply pressure into the polymer solution source 108 and inadvertently neglect to turn off the valve after the transfer is complete. Continuous flow of the inert gas into the polymer solution source 108 may

cause micro bubbles to be generated which then can travel into the buffer tank 106 and cause contamination and non-uniformity in the solution. In one embodiment, the momentary valve 112 is a manually operated valve that requires the operator to manually press down on the valve 112 to allow the flow of the inert gas into the polymer solution source 108. In one embodiment, the operator presses down on the valve 112 for a few seconds (e.g., 5 seconds) to generate sufficient pressure in the polymer solution source 108 to transfer the polymer solution into the buffer tank 106. In another embodiment, the momentary valve 112 is configured so that it will turn on only for a predetermined amount of time (e.g., about 5 seconds) so that no excess inert gas is flown into the polymer solution source 108.

Tsujii only showed a valve coupled to a solution source tank but did not even discuss what kind of valve. Particularly, Tsujii did not suggest the prevention of excess bubble or inert gas into the system.

Combining Tsujii to Kishimura would have not led to Claims 1-9, 13,14, 19-24, 26 and 27 even if Kishimura disclosed maintaining a relatively constant level of polymer solution.

Therefore, Applicant submits that Claims 1-9, 13,14, 19-24, 26 and 27 are not obvious over Tsujii in view of Kishimura.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 11-12, 16-18 and 25 are allowable.

Applicant also thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 10 and 15 are allowable subject matter if rewritten in independent forms. Claims 10 and 15 have so been rewritten into their independent forms.

In view of these amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 10, 11-12, 15, 16-18, and 25 are now in condition for allowance, and request allowance of said claims.

If the Examiner determines the prompt allowance of these claims could be facilitated by a telephone conference, the Examiner is invited to contact Mimi Dao at (408) 720-8300.

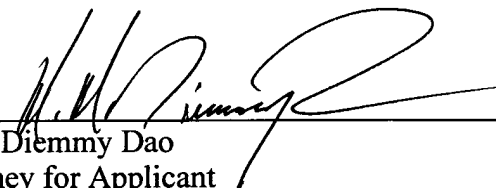
Deposit Account Authorization

Authorization is hereby given to charge our Deposit Account No. 02-2666 for any charges that may be due. Furthermore, if an extension is required, then Applicant hereby requests such extension.

Respectfully submitted,

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